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ILLUSIVE VISIONS.

MODERN science has made us aware that the old belief in apparitions rested on nothing more than illusive fancies caused by some kind of physical derangement of the person so affected. It is important that young persons should be made thoroughly aware of the fact, that there never was and never will be any such fancy which is not capable of being explained upon natural grounds. A person in weak health, though in perfect possession of all his faculties, begins to be troubled by waking visions of persons with whom he may be familiar, or who may have been long dead, or who sometimes may appear as perfect strangers to him. The spectres who flit before him, 'come like shadows' and 'so depart.' They represent, in the most perfect manner, the reproductions of things that are or were—utterly intangible creations. The subject of these visitations may hear the spectres converse, and they may even talk in turn to him. He is perfectly aware of their visionary nature, and is as convinced of their unreality as is the friend who sees them not, and to whom the phantoms are described. No suspicions of insane delusion as to these visitations can be entertained for a moment, and the question may therefore naturally be put to the man of science, 'How can these illusions be accounted for?' The answer is to be found in one of the simplest studies in the physiology of nerves and of mind, and shews us that these illusions have a material basis, or that, in the words of the poet, the 'shadow proves the substance true.'

To thoroughly elucidate the subject of illusions within a brief space, we may begin by selecting one or two illustrations of illusive vision, such as have been recorded for instruction and edification in the pages of the physiologist. One of the best known cases—deriving its interest from the fact that the subject of the visitations in question himself narrates the facts—is that of Nicolai, a well-known citizen and bookseller of Berlin, who read an account of his case before the Berlin Academy of Sciences. We shall give the

account in his own words. 'During the few latter months of the year 1790,' says Nicolai, 'I had experienced several melancholy incidents, which deeply affected me, particularly in September, from which time I suffered an almost uninterrupted series of misfortunes, that affected me with the most poignant grief. I was accustomed to be bled twice a year, and this had been done once on the 9th of July, but was omitted to be repeated at the end of the year 1790. . . I had, in January and February of the year 1791, the additional misfortune to experience several extremely unpleasant circumstances, which were followed on the 24th of February by a most violent altercation. My wife and another person came into my apartment in the morning in order to console me; but I was too much agitated by a series of incidents which had most powerfully affected my moral feeling, to be capable of attending to them. On a sudden, I perceived at about the distance of ten steps, a form like that of a deceased person. I pointed at it, asking my wife if she did not see it. It was but natural that she should not see anything; my question therefore alarmed her very much, and she sent immediately for a physician. The phantasm continued for some minutes. I grew at length more calm, and being extremely exhausted fell into a restless sleep, which lasted about half an hour. The physician ascribed the vision to violent mental emotion, and hoped there would be no return; but the violent agitation of my mind had in some way disordered my nerves, and produced further consequences, which deserve a more minute description.

'At four in the afternoon, the form which I had seen in the morning reappeared. I was by myself when this happened, and being rather uneasy at the incident, went to my wife's apartment; but there likewise I was persecuted by the form, which, however, at intervals disappeared, and always presented itself in a standing posture. About six o'clock there appeared also several walking figures, which had no connection with the first. After the first day, the form of the deceased person no more appeared; but its place

was supplied with many other phantasms, sometimes representing acquaintances, but mostly strangers: those whom I knew were composed of living and deceased persons, but the number of the latter was comparatively small. . . When I shut my eyes these forms would sometimes vanish entirely, though there were instances when I beheld them with my eyes closed; yet, when they disappeared on such occasions, they generally returned when I opened my eyes. . . They all appeared to me in their natural size, and as distinct as if alive, exhibiting different shades of carnation in the uncovered parts, as well as different colours and fashions in their dresses, though the colours seemed somewhat paler than in real nature; none of the figures appeared particularly terrible, comical, or disgusting, most of them being of an indifferent shape, and some presenting a pleasing aspect. The longer these persons continued to visit me, the more frequently did they return, while at the same time they increased in number about four weeks after they had first appeared. I also began to hear them talk; sometimes among themselves, but more frequently they addressed their discourse to me; their speeches being uncommonly short and never of an unpleasant turn. At different times there appeared to me both dear and sensible friends of both sexes, whose addresses tended to appease my grief, which had not yet wholly subsided; their consolatory speeches were in general addressed to me when I was alone. Sometimes, however, I was accosted by these consoling friends while I was engaged in company, and not unfrequently while real persons were speaking to me. The consolatory addresses consisted sometimes of abrupt phrases, and at other times they were regularly executed.'

Such was Nicolai's account of the phantom-visitors who addressed and consoled him in his domestic affliction. It is interesting to pursue still further his account of their disappearance. The reader will recollect that Nicolai had neglected to repeat at the end of 1790 the blood-letting in which it was customary in the days we speak of for our forefathers to indulge. It was at last decided that leeches should be used, and on April 20, 1791, at eleven o'clock in the morning, Nicolai informs us the operation was performed. 'No person,' he continues, 'was with me besides the surgeon; but during the operation my chamber was crowded with human visions of all descriptions. This continued uninterruptedly till about half an hour after four o'clock, just when my digestion commenced. I then perceived that they began to move more slowly. Soon after, their colour began to fade, and at seven o'clock they were entirely white. But they moved very little, though the forms were as distinct as before; growing, however, by degrees more obscure, yet not fewer in number, as had generally been the case. . . They now seemed to dissolve in the air, while fragments of some of them continued visible for a considerable time. About eight

o'clock, the room was entirely cleared of my fantastic visitors. Since that time,' adds Nicolai, 'I have felt twice or three times a sensation as if they were going to reappear, without, however, actually seeing anything. The same sensation surprised me just before I drew up this account, while I was examining some papers relative to these phenomena, which I had drawn up in the year 1791.'

Such is a historical account of what may appear to the senses of a sane and reasonable individual. Before entering on their scientific explanation it will be advisable to give one or two further examples of the phenomena in question. On the occasion of the fire which destroyed part of the Crystal Palace in the winter of 1866-7, part of the menagerie had been sacrificed to the flames. The chimpanzee, however, was believed to have escaped from his cage, and was presently seen on the roof endeavouring to save himself by clutching in wild despair one of the iron beams which the fire had spared. The struggles of the animal were watched with an intense curiosity mingled with horror and sympathy for the supposed fate which awaited the unfortunate monkey. What was the surprise of the spectators of an imminent tragedy to find that the object which in the guise of a terrified ape, had excited their fears, resolved itself into a piece of canvas blind, so tattered, that to the eye of the imagination and when moved by the wind, it presented the exact counterpart of a struggling animal!

Such an example is of especial interest, because it proves to us that not one person alone, but a large number of spectators may be deceived by an object imperfectly seen—and aided in the illusion by a vivid imagination—into fancying all the details of a spectacle of which the chief actor is entirely a myth.

A singular case has been given on strict medical authority of a lady, who, walking from Penrhyn to Falmouth—her mind being occupied with the subject of drinking-fountains—was certain she saw in the road a newly erected fountain, bearing the inscription, 'If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink.' As a matter of course she mentioned her interest in seeing such an erection to the daughters of the gentleman who was supposed to have placed the fountain in its position. They assured her that no such fountain was in existence; but convinced of the reality of her senses on the ground that 'seeing is believing,' she repaired to the spot where she had seen the fountain, only to find, however, a few scattered stones in place of the expected erection.

We may now turn to consider the scientific explanation of such curious phenomena in human existence. The causes of these illusions are not difficult to understand, since they in reality depend upon a slight derangement of the powers whereby we see and hear in an ordinary and normal method. To make our meaning clear, let us briefly consider what takes place in ordinary sensation, when we see or hear the objects and sounds of every-day existence. The eye alighting on an object transfers an impression of that object

to the brain through the special (optic) nerve of sight, which leads from the eye to the part of the brain exercising the sense of sight. We in reality do not see with the eye. That organ is merely an arrangement of lenses adapted to receive, focus, and otherwise adjust rays of light streaming from the objects we see. The function of the eye is simply that of adjusting and correlating the conditions necessary for the production of an impression. This impression is carried in due course to a special part of the brain, where it becomes transformed into a special sensation—that of sight. We thus truly see not with the eye, but with the brain, or rather with that portion of the brain which lies in direct relation with the nerves of sight. The eye represents the lenses of the photographer's camera; but the brain corresponds to the sensitive plate which receives the image of the sitter, and on which all subsequent alterations of the image are effected. Of the other senses, the same prominent feature may also be expressed—namely, that in the brain and not in the mere organ of sense must be allocated the true seat of knowledge. The ear modifies waves of sound; but it is the brain which distinguishes, appreciates, and acts upon the information conveyed by the organ of hearing. The finger touches an object; but the seat of knowledge does not exist at the extremity of the hand. The impression of touch is duly conveyed to the brain as before, there to be analysed, commented upon, and if necessary, acted upon as well.

On the appreciation of the simple fact that the brain is the true seat of the senses, rests the whole explanation of the ghosts and apparitions which occasionally attend the footsteps and meet the eyes of humanity. When we are conscious of looking at a real object, a sensation of sight is formed in the brain, as we have seen. Such a sensation we called an 'objective' one, because it is derived from a veritable object. So also, when we hear a tune played by a person whom we see, or of whose existence, even when unseen, we entertain no doubt, the sensation of sound is then called 'subjective.' But there are many familiar instances in which the power of the mind to reproduce the sensations, sights, and sounds we have received, is demonstrated. The day-dreamer can sometimes bring the scenes in which he has once taken part so vividly before his mental gaze, that his reverie may actually be broken by the words which unconsciously flow from his lips as his imagination starts into bodily action. Such a power of fancy and imagination is the beginning or faint imitation of a still more powerful means which we possess of bringing before ourselves the forms and scenes which have once been objectively present with us. In the dream this power is illustrated typically enough. From the background of consciousness so to speak, we project forwards, in our sleep, the pictures which a busy brain is reproducing, or it may be piecing together from the odds and ends of its fancy to form the ludicrous combinations we are familiar with in the 'land of Nod.' And if we carry the idea of this same power being exercised in our waking moments, to form the ghosts of science, the explanation of the otherwise curious and mysterious subject of illusive visions will be complete.

We know then, that the brain has the ordinary

power of forming images which may be projected outwards in the form of the fancies of every-day life. But these projected fancies may grow into plain and apparent sensations or images under the requisite conditions. When we hear 'a ringing in the ears,' we know perfectly well that no objective sound exists, and scientifically we say that the sensation of hearing in such a case is an internal or subjective one. When we see flashes of light which have no existence in the outside world on which we happen to be gazing, we explain their occurrence in the same way. Now, on such a basis, the ghosts of science are both raised and laid. The images and phantoms of Nicolai, like the sparks or flashes of light, are subjective sensations. They arise, in other words, from some irritation of that part of the brain, which would have received the impressions of sight had the objects in question had an actual existence. But the subject also involves a reference to bodily condition and to memory itself. Primarily, it will be found that illusive visions appear only when the health of the subject of these visitations is in a weakly state. The derangement of the health is the primary cause of these curious states.

It is, however, equally worthy of remark that many of the phantasms of Nicolai were persons whom he knew. Such visions then may be supposed to simply represent the effects of very recent images which had been received and stored in the brain, and which were evolved by the exercise of unconscious memory. Of the deceased persons whose images appeared to him, the same remark may be made—memory again reproducing, by the subjective impressions of the brain, the forms of dead friends. But what, it may be asked, of the strange visions whom Nicolai did not recognise? The reply which science offers, is that these also were images or conceptions of persons whom Nicolai must have seen at some time, but whom he could not remember; mysterious reproductions, by the brain, of events which had been impressed thereon, but which had escaped remembrance by ordinary memory. Even the characters whom Nicolai may have simply heard described, could be thus produced, and present apparently the images of persons with whom he was not, as a matter of conscious memory, familiar. The brain, in other words, registers and remembers more than memory can evolve; and it is reasonable to conceive that forgotten images of things or persons once seen formed the mysterious strangers of Nicolai's waking dreams.

It is noteworthy that only after a long period of visitation from his fantastic friends, did Nicolai begin to hear them speak. Thus, the sense of hearing had also come in time to lend its aid in propagating the illusions; and the fact that the visions addressed Nicolai concerning his own immediate affairs and his personal griefs and sorrows, clearly shews the unconscious action of a mind which was brooding over its own trials, and which was evolving from within itself the comfort and consolation of kindly friends. Last of all, that the material basis of these visionary friends resided in the weakly body of their host, is proved by their disappearance on the resumption of the customary blood-letting and the improvement of the health—an additional

fact shewing the relation of the healthy body to the sound mind.

One of the most interesting cases of vision-seeing by a person of culture and intelligence is that related in the *Athenaeum* of January 10, 1880, by the Rev. Dr Jessopp, who, in Lord Orford's library, when engaged in copying some literary notes, saw a large white hand, and then, as he tells us, perceived 'the figure of a somewhat large man, with his back to the fire, bending slightly over the table, and apparently examining the pile of books I had been at work upon.' The figure was dressed in some antique ecclesiastical garb. The figure vanished when Dr Jessopp made a movement with his arm, but reappeared, and again vanished when the reverend narrator threw down a book with which he had been engaged. Dr Jessopp's recital called forth considerable comment, and a letter from Dr Andrew Wilson of Edinburgh, presenting a theory based on the principles of subjective sensations, treated of in the present paper. After detailing the fashion in which subjective sensations become projected forwards, Dr Wilson says (*Athenaeum*, January 17, 1880): 'The only point concerning which any dubiety exists, concerns the exact origin of the specific images which appear as the result of subjective sensory action. My own idea is that almost invariably the projected image is that of a person we have seen and read about... In Dr Jessopp's case there is one fact which seems to weigh materially in favour of the idea that the vision which appeared to him in Lord Orford's library was an unconscious reproduction of some mental image or figure about which the Doctor may very likely have concerned himself in the way of antiquarian study.' It is most interesting to observe that in the succeeding number of the *Athenaeum*, a Mr Walter Rye writes: 'Dr A. Wilson's solution "that the 'spectre'... was an unconscious reproduction of some mental image or figure about which Dr Jessopp may very likely have concerned himself in the way of antiquarian study," seems the right one, and I think I can identify the "ghost." The ecclesiastically dressed large man, with closely cut reddish-brown hair, and shaved cheek, appears to me the Doctor's remembrance of the portrait of Parsons, the Jesuit Father, whom he calls in his "One Generation of a Norfolk House," "the manager and moving spirit" of the Jesuit mission in England... Dr Jessopp when he thought he saw the figure, was alone in an old library, belonging to a Walpole, and Father Parsons was the leader of Henry Walpole, the hero of his just-cited book. Small wonder, therefore, if the association of ideas made him think of Parsons.'

All such illusive visions are thus readily explained as the creatures of an imagination which, through some brain-disturbance, is enabled to project its visions forward, on the seats of sense, as the 'ringing' in our ears is produced by some irritation of the hearing-centre of the brain. The known vision is a reproduction of a present memory, and the unknown vision is the reproduction of a forgotten figure which has nevertheless been stored away in some nook or cranny of the memory-chamber.

Science may thus—as we have before had frequent occasion to assure our readers—dispel the illusion by its free explanation; and science has

no higher function or nobler use than when, by its aid, a subject like the present is rescued from the domain of the mysterious, and brought within the sphere of ordinary knowledge.

A LIFE'S ATONEMENT.

CHAPTER XVIII.—HISTORY.

'War's declared! Hurrah! Come and join us.'

NEITHER Mr Tasker nor his assailant gave prospect of early recovery. Tasker had received a terrible shaking; and Closky had been thrown with such force against the railings of Dr Brand's house, that he incurred a severe concussion of the brain, and made no conscious movement for many days. With the wide benevolence of British charity, which falls like the rain of heaven upon the just and unjust, this man was nursed as carefully for penal servitude as if it had been intended to restore him to lifelong happiness and comfort. The emotions which agitated Mr Tasker's bosom when he recovered his senses and discovered that Closky lay in the next bed to him, may in some measure have retarded recovery; but be that as it may, five weeks elapsed before he was able to leave the hospital walls and go in pursuit of the friend and compatriot to whom he had intrusted his affairs. The friend and compatriot was not to be found. Mr Tasker found his place of business in Acre Buildings, closed; and the inquiries which he caused immediately to be set on foot resulted in a discovery. The compatriot had realised everything realisable, and had disappeared with the proceeds into space. Detective ingenuity revealed the fact that the land to which he had betaken himself was one with which England had no extradition treaty. Tasker's creditors were for the most part of his own people, and had compassion upon him; and he with a true Eastern love for jewellery, had got together in the days of his prosperity a large collection of gauds of value, the which he now disposed of as circumstances pressed him.

When Closky was so far recovered as to be able to endure with safety the first examination before a magistrate, he was taken from the hospital to the police court; and Hastings, Benjamin Hartley, and Dr Brand met Mr Tasker there, and gave their evidence. The prisoner was formally committed for trial; and the business being over, Tasker essayed an appeal to his old employer. Mr Hartley would have none of him, and bade him sternly, if he valued his own freedom, to speak to him no more. Tasker went away sadly and disposed of a jewel, and broken-heartedly drank away the proceeds. He was so crushed, that he made none but the feeblest efforts to recover his position; and he had, moreover, so little will to curb his old propensities to extravagance, that by the time the trial came on he was on the very edge of the gulf of poverty. The counsel for the prosecution alluded to Tasker's losses, which he deplored in feeling terms as the result of the ruffianly and unprovoked assault of the prisoner. Closky was found guilty, and sentenced to twelve years' transportation beyond the seas. Penkridge, his old companion in Bolter's Rents, sat by Mrs Closky

in court whilst sentence was passed, and took the poor woman out and offered her whisky, which was by that time perhaps the only consolation he knew.

The necessary attendances at the police court and at the assizes brought Hastings and Dr Brand together. Hastings took a fancy to the Doctor, who returned the young man's liking cordially. Grief for the death of the dearest cannot last for ever, and Hastings was growing reconciled to loss; but he stood steadfast to his resolves, and accepted the responsibilities which his new position threw upon him. Mrs Brand would fain have enlisted him in the cause of Bolter's Rents; but beyond money he could be persuaded to give nothing to that enterprise. The little lady accepted his donation with reluctance, and would have refused it outright but for the thought of that great ocean of poverty on the shores of which she now walked so often. All this time the rumours of war were growing, and Benjamin Hartley made money as only millionaires make money when the fate of nations approaches. He was much in London negotiating on 'Change and in the arcana of Cresus Brothers and others of that golden breed, for vast coups of financial policy.

One night Will Fairholte walked quietly into the chambers to which Hastings had recently removed in King's Bench Walk, Temple, and where, to keep himself out of harm's way, he was assiduously reading for the bar. Hastings sprang eagerly to salute him. 'What brings you to town? Have you any news?'

'None,' said Will, shaking his head. 'I am here on business. The poor old governor is quite broken, and can attend to nothing.' His voice quivered as he spoke, and he looked pale and wretched.

'Will, old friend,' said Hastings gently, 'you are wearing yourself out. It ought to lie more heavily on me than you; for though, heaven knows, I would do anything now to undo what I did, I know I helped to this miserable end, and that all your strength went to prevent it.'

'You meant no wrong,' said Will, 'nor I; but I'm afraid we all did wrong together. There is nothing to do but to wait now, and no hope that waiting will do anything for us.'

'The scoundrel who ruined him has met with his deserts,' said Hastings; 'and there's some comfort any way.'

'Little comfort,' said Will, shaking his head.—'Hastings,' he added suddenly, 'I must tell somebody, or I shall go mad. Before this terrible thing happened, and poor Frank disappeared, he and I were rivals. And I feel sometimes so hideous a temptation to be glad that he is gone and out of my way, that it is killing me.' After saying this, he buried his head in his hands and leaned above the table.

'A morbid dread of a foolish shadow, Will, believe me,' his friend said kindly. 'I know you better. A casuist torment, which a man of your conscientious and sensitive nature is safe to create for himself as often as he can. No, no, Will. Don't fight phantoms of that sort any longer. Turn daylight on them. You are worn and tired just now. Come into the streets, and let the wind blow the cobwebs from your brain.' He clapped his companion on the shoulder.

Will arose without a word, and they went out

together. They passed up the silent walk, and through the narrow way beyond it, and came out at Temple Bar, where they turned westward. As they passed the western church, there broke upon the air the sound of a scattered cheer, and then another and another. A chance acquaintance of Hastings' came by at that moment arm-in-arm with a friend, and turning at the sound of the cheering, lifted his hat and shouted 'Hurrah!'

'What's the matter, Ward?' asked Hastings, laying his hand upon the arm of the man who cheered. 'Is war declared?'

'Hello!' cried the other, turning round. 'That you, Hastings? Now, old man, you always said that if there was any fighting to be done, you'd get a commission. Go for it. Now's your time.'

'Is war declared?' Hastings asked again.

'Yes,' roared the other in reply. 'War's declared! Hurrah! Come and join us. We shall sail in less than a week.'

The street was full of excited people. Stranger questioned stranger. Men who had never seen each other before shook hands upon the news, and cheered. Some doubted, some denied, but all were wild at the prospect, and the general heart beat with a fierce joy. Rickety clerks and pale shopmen felt the blood tingle in their thin veins, and were ready to march and fight and die. Most people after this lapse of a quarter of a century have come to believe that the Crimean War, that terrible and splendid crusade, was a huge blunder; but in '54 the large soul of England was throbbing to the old heroic music, and beat to another measure than that mean tune of '77, which still jars on our ears. It was the old great mission on which the sons of this Mother of the Nations were going—to lay the Oppressor low, and to succour them that had no other helper, and to hold Europe clean of tyranny. A great purpose, and howsoever it failed or fell, carried through with a great spirit. Ay! and even you—pale shopman and rickety clerk—had a right to cheer in such a cause; and it was well for you that your thin blood ran warm and tingled, and well for the land that bore you that your hearts responded to her call.

Hastings' chance acquaintance went eastward, cheering still, and left the two friends facing each other, pale and excited.

'I shall volunteer,' said Hastings, catching Will by the arm, and walking on rapidly.

'I wish I could,' said Will, sighing. He caught his breath at the thought. No; it was not possible. His father was dying. He could not leave him to bear the burden of his griefs alone.

'At last,' said Hastings, hurried by the excitement of the time into forgetfulness of his companion's sorrows and his own—'At last the world has something in it for a man to do. I'm told they fight—these fellows; and it won't be an easy business. But to think, Will, to think that at last we are let loose with leave to pull that bragging bully down! *Ca ira, ca ira, ca ira,*' he sang under his breath, and marched on wildly, with Will silent at his side.

Hastings went to work next morning; and before Will Fairholte left town, rushed in upon him with news that he was certainly going to the Crimea. Will heard him sadly, but congratulated him with all his heart, and envied him not a little. All he could do was to go home, and make the

poor old father's last days a little lighter than they could be without him. And he had within him—or so he held it—a greater enemy than the Czar of all the Russias could bring against him. So when the time came, he went back home, and soothed the old man's fretful grief, and buried his own, and lived in outward melancholy quiet, and prayed hard, poor soul, and did his duty, and found no rest.

When Frank read that terrible heading to the paragraph in the morning paper, he sat still for a moment, stunned. Then he smoothed the paper out mechanically, and folded it, and read the hard dry narrative through. It ran thus :

'Early yesterday morning, two men, named respectively Isaac Shakell and John Turner, were proceeding to work, when they were arrested by the sight of a well-dressed figure which lay prostrate in the mud in Spaniard's Lane, at a distance of about three hundred yards from the *Spaniard's Inn*. The figure was that of a man of about twenty-five years of age. He was quite dead, and had apparently lain there all night, for his clothes were saturated with mud and rain. Letters were found upon him, addressed to James Groves at the *Spotted Dog Tavern*, Bloomsbury. Inquiries were at once set on foot ; and the deceased was immediately identified as the landlord of that well-known hostel. All that is known of this tragic incident is that, at a late hour on the previous evening, the deceased left the *Spaniard's Inn* in the society of two friends, who returned almost at once, and shortly afterwards left the house for that of a gentleman in the neighbourhood, with whom they spent the night. These gentlemen agree in stating that the deceased was in a condition to take care of himself. When the body was found, the head rested upon a large and jagged stone, upon which he had evidently fallen backwards. Except for the wound thus produced, which was clearly the cause of death, there were no marks of violence upon his person. A pocket in the breast of his overcoat was turned inside out, and a chamois-leather bag, known to have contained the sum of ninety-eight pounds ten shillings in notes and gold, had been abstracted. The police on visiting the spot believed that they could discern evidences of a brief struggle, and their attention being called to a breach in the hedge near at hand, they succeeded in tracing footsteps for some distance. The most singular fact in the whole of this mysterious and tragic business is, that the bag above alluded to was found at the side of the field, at some distance from the track left by the footsteps of the criminal, and that a purse containing a considerable sum of money was found on the person of the deceased ! The police have as yet no clue to the perpetrator of this apparently purposeless outrage.'

After this came another paragraph, headed 'Mysterious Restitution ;' which set forth that a ticket-porter had delivered a package containing a sum of one hundred pounds in gold at the *Spotted Dog Tavern*, with the statement that the gentleman who borrowed it on the previous evening in Spaniard's Lane had sent it back again.

All this, understanding it quite clearly, Frank read over, and then laid the paper down. He put on a velvet wideawake, and left the house, and walked quietly away. Nobody paid him any

unusual regard, and he walked on, not knowing where he went, and not caring. He passed through Uxbridge and the two Wycomes ; and night fell as he entered on that lonely stretch of country which lies northward on the Oxford Road. He had not tasted food or drink, although he had put thirty miles between himself and home since he started. Nor did he feel any want of food or drink, or think of anything but the one consuming terror which dwelt with him. The inexorable terrible Past set its pillar of cloud by day before him, and its pillar of fire by night. All day long the sordid and hideous crime of which he had been guilty enacted itself in shadowy form before him, and in the night it glared in fiery lines. Fire seemed within and without him as the weary automatic feet went on, hour after hour, hour after hour, until, before the eastern skies were gray, he sank from sheer exhaustion, and lay until the sun aroused him from dreams which enacted his crime with horrible iteration. He rose again, and once more the automatic feet carried him on. Where he had lain on the bare road, he was mud from head to heel. His eyes were bleared with the sleepless agony of his soul, and his knees bent beneath him. Country people passing him stared and laughed and pointed, believing him to be tipsy. He scarcely saw them as he staggered by. Coming to a little village inn, he entered, and called for bread-and-cheese and ale. He tendered a sovereign, and was going away without the change, when the host ran after him and placed it in his hand. He took it like a man in a dream, and roamed on again with all his senses clouded by the action of the food he had taken, and by the fatigue he had undergone, and the aching pains which followed his rest upon the muddy road. Yet the cloudy presentment of his tragedy was still before him in the cloud, and the dry fire of Remorse burned on within him. And he knew that though he lived beyond the uttermost span of human years, the fire would burn.

Thus with horrible automatic step, without volition of his own, he walked on slowly and more slowly, until he reached the little town of Thame. It was with no thought of escaping the detecting hand of justice that he avoided the better sort of inns. Exhausted Nature cried aloud for food and sleep ; but he went wearily about the town until he came upon a little public-house in a by-street, and ate coarse food there ravenously and without relish, and then mounted the rickety stairs, and threw himself upon the uninviting bed and slept. Through the dark hollows of the night his dread walked with him, nameless, indefinable, full of unspeakable fear, unrecognised. When he awoke, he knew the companion of his sleep ; and first as an added terror, and then as a first faint gleam of hope, and then again as an added terror came the thought, 'I shall go mad !'

The landlord and the landlady of the place had been discussing him, and when he descended the rickety stairs in the morning, the landlord questioned him.

'Might I make bold to ask where you're a-goin', mate ?' asked the landlord.

Frank had not thought of going anywhere, but had started on that vainest of all vain enterprises, the attempt to outwalk himself. But he answered 'Liverpool,' thinking that would do as well as another place, and that he would go there.

'You bean't a seafarin' man?' said the landlord, pursuing his inquiry.

'No,' said Frank.

'Lookin' out for a job anywhere?'.

'No,' said Frank again.

'Got money, maybe?' said the landlord.

'I have enough to pay your bill,' Frank answered, weary of the questions, but scarcely resenting them.

'That's right enough,' returned the host; 'a man's business is a man's business, and yourn ain't mine, and mine ain't yourn. But I suppose you can guess as it looks odd to see a man like you a-comin' into a place like this.' Frank returned no answer, though the landlord waited. By-and-by he went on again. 'You've been on the loose, I reckon?'

'Suppose I have,' Frank returned, lifting his eyes for the first time. 'That gives you no right to question me. What do I owe you?'

'That's reasonable enough,' said the landlord; 'but a man like you can't help knowin' as it's suspicious-like, don't you see?—'

'Will that pay you?' Frank asked, laying five shillings on the table.

'For a gentleman as doesn't want no questions asked, and doesn't want to be interfered with,' said the landlord, 'I think an extra five bob ud be the handsome thing.'

Frank laid down two other half-crowns, and went his way without further question. The landlord looked after him, jingling the ten shillings in his hand as he stood. His wife looked over his shoulder at the retreating limping figure. 'Poor young gentleman!' said she; 'I wonder what's wrong with him? He's in some sort o' trouble.'

'Ah!' said the landlord, shaking his head with an air of prophecy, 'we shall hear of *him* again. He's done something; and with this sage conclusion, the landlord walked indoors, and threw the ten shillings into the till.

'I thought he was a gentleman,' said the landlady, 'directly I set eyes on him, for all the dirt on his clothes.'

'Anybody could ha' seen that,' said the landlord, 'if he'd had a heavylaunch o' mud on him.'

Frank went onward in the old mood. There was a gap between his common life and this which his mind almost failed to bridge; and he looked back dimly and with a lack of interest not easy to understand, on a happy life which somebody else seemed to have led a long long time ago. And all this time he never said to himself, 'I am miserable,' or 'My punishment is heavy,' or had any really conscious form of thought at all, except for instants of time, when Memory stabbed him, and then he always fell back into the dreamy horror which had before possessed him. Late that night it rained, and he was out upon a lonely road with only one light in sight, and that shone ruby red in the darkness. The road led him towards this light, and the telegraph wires made a mourning noise in the wind as he plashed along below them. Losing the red light now and then among the trees as the road twisted, he found himself suddenly below it, and near a railway arch. A set of wooden steps led towards the rustic railway station, and not knowing why, he stood before them in the rain until the far-off roar and whistle of an approaching train reached his ears. Still scarcely knowing why, he mounted the wet steps,

and faced a porter who was stamping down the platform in a gleaming tarpaulin cloak.

'Going by this train?' said the porter. 'She doesn't stop till Rugby.'

'Give me ticket for Rugby,' Frank answered. It mattered nothing where he went, and he allowed chance to drift him.

The train came lumbering up, and he entered one of the carriages. But for himself it was empty; and as he sat there, the monotonous clank of carriage and engine sent him to sleep, and for an hour he was at peace. But Remorse stood ready for him with that Nessus cloak of torment which she carries, and wrapped him in the fiery shroud when he awoke. So in the rain, he turned into the streets of the familiar town. Rugby! he had spent the happiest hours of his life, the happiest years there, as many hundreds of English gentlemen had done before, and have done since his day. And as he walked about the silent rainy streets, the magic of things familiar laid a hand upon him, until recalling what he had been, he was seized with such a passion of self-pity that he laid his head down upon a garden-wall and wept as if his heart would break. As if his heart would break?

His heart was broken.

Though pity for himself unsealed his tears—and few men ever weep tears of real passion but at the bidding of their own sorrows, and not another's—his soul, unclouded for a moment, looked back, and saw all whom he had left and lost who loved him, and he wept for their sakes and for the tears which they would weep. And thereby—as I would fain believe—God's hand of healing for the first time touched that sinful and suffering soul. Shine out, Repentance, with angelic eyes, sweet opposite of harsh Remorse; shine out, and lead us to a purer stream than Lethe's, which is all Remorse dare pray for!

PROFESSIONAL ROBBERS OF THE PESHAWUR VALLEY.

PESHAWUR, which is about sixteen miles from the Khyber Pass, has a population of fifty or sixty thousand. Its position at the entrance of the chief gateway into Cabul gathers within its walls men from almost every district in India and every country in Central Asia. About two miles from the city is the military cantonment. It is perhaps the most important in the whole country. In general there are stationed in it nine or ten regiments and three or four batteries of artillery. It is not my intention to discuss the importance of its position or give a sketch of its history. My purpose is to give a short account of some of the robberies which took place when I was quartered in it some years ago.

Many soldiers who have been stationed at the cantonment have left Peshawur without any knowledge of the city itself. This does not arise from any unwillingness on the part of the British soldier to visit the city, but from a garrison order forbidding him to enter it without a written permission from his commanding officer. Such an order is seemingly a very hard one, but it is one which is absolutely necessary. In the bazaars are to be found men from almost every district in India; and what is more to our purpose at present, men belonging to the many tribes which occupy the neighbouring hills. These tribes in their form of

government and in their devotion to their chiefs are very similar to the Highland clans of Scotland in former times. Though they are at constant enmity with each other, there are two things which can band these tribes, and these are by them considered as one—a war with the English, and the defence of their religion. Such a people are readily excited, and street brawls in the native city of Peshawur are consequently by no means uncommon. The appearance of the British soldier has often a maddening influence on the more religious Mussulmans; and Europeans, at least those belonging to the military branch of the service, have not yet learned to take meekly any insult offered to them by natives. It is on this account that permission to enter the city is so carefully guarded by commanding officers.

Arms, horses, and money are the chief things sought after by the thieves and robbers in the Peshawur Valley and adjoining hills; and there is no breach of charity in stating that the men of the hill-tribes are professional robbers. To secure these articles, they adopt almost every conceivable plan, and shew no little skill and daring, as may be seen from the following illustrations, which, I may add, are given without any colouring, and are strictly true.

Mr Lowenthal, a well-known missionary, stationed at Peshawur, was one night sitting at his desk, when he saw his *dhurree* (carpet) quietly lifted up by a man's head rising apparently out of the floor. An exclamation of surprise and a call for help caused the head to disappear. On inspection, Mr Lowenthal found that his house had been entered in a way somewhat unusual, but by no means new. The thieves—there must have been more than one engaged in the affair—had dug a hole close to the study, and run a tunnel right under the wall to the middle of the floor of the room. Some idea of the skill of the miners may be learned from the fact that Mr Lowenthal was not disturbed by any noise until the head of the robber was actually in the room. A year or two after the above incident took place, this eminent oriental scholar was murdered in his veranda by one of his own servants.

Earthquakes are of frequent occurrence in the Peshawur Valley, and on this account nearly every house is built of mud mixed with chopped straw, the same material being used for out-house buildings, of which the stable is generally the most important. A mounted officer has perhaps two hundred pounds invested in horses, and it is therefore a most important matter for him that these animals should be protected from the hands of thieves. Many are the plans used for this purpose. Perhaps the most successful, and consequently the most popular, is to fasten an iron chain round each hind-leg of the horse, and padlock the chains to an iron bar driven firmly into the ground. This, however, does not always defy the thieves, as they know the use of a file as well as their pale-faced neighbours. There are instances known when the robbers, finding all their attempts fail to get rid of the chains, in their anger have had the brutality to cut the feet off the horse.

Many officers trust to *chokeahars* or watchmen; but these men are only to be implicitly trusted when there is no danger near. The Sikh watchmen are an exception, but they are difficult to

find. There has ever been a deadly feud between the Afghans and the Sikhs, and a sleeping Sikh watchman found by an Afghan prowler receives no mercy. A knife driven into his heart ends sleep and life together. In general the watchmen are natives of the district, and are quite aware that the most pleasant part of their duty is to draw their wages once a month. They may actually see the thieves loosening their master's horses, and the groom may be lying within a yard of the horses watching with fear and trembling every movement; yet neither will interfere. They will not even shew any sign of being awake, because any attempt on their part to disturb what is going on, or to raise an alarm, would make the thieves take notice of them in a way far from pleasant. There is, in fact, no plan to protect horses which has not occasionally proved a failure. The gallant General commanding the Peshawur Division at the time to which I am alluding, had a very valuable mule—an animal greatly prized in a hilly country—which he placed for security in front of a guard of native soldiers and within a few yards of the sentry's beat. It attracted the notice of some of the hillmen, and a little cautious daring made it their prize. Selecting a dark night for their enterprise, they crawled along the ground until they reached the animal. With one slash of their knives the head and heel ropes were cut; and before the sentry could do anything, one of the thieves was on the back of the mule, and both were lost in darkness.

The most popular plan of horse-stealing is, however, somewhat different. It requires at least three men to carry it out comfortably and successfully. One of them quietly steals his way into the stable, and lays hold of a cord which has been pushed through one of the air-holes in the wall by one of his friends outside. The two use the string as a saw, while the third man pours upon it a plentiful supply of water. The cord silently and speedily cuts its way down the mud wall. In a wonderfully short time the three craftsmen manage to saw round a portion of the wall, which when pushed outwards, leaves a space sufficient to allow a horse to pass out. This done, the remaining work presents no difficulty. The ropes which bind the horse are cut, and in a short time he is cantering to the hills with generally two and sometimes his three new masters on his back.

A somewhat bold and impudent exploit in the horse-stealing line was the amusement and the talk of the station for some days. The cantonment is literally a camp. At sundown a chain of sentries communicating with each other is posted right round it. This demands a great number of men, and all regiments, cavalry and infantry, European and native, nightly give their proportions. A native trooper on the occasion to which I refer, fastened his horse to the peg fixed about the middle of his 'beat'; and to keep up his courage and himself warm—the night was very dark and bitterly cold—walked pretty smartly backwards and forwards on his 'beat.' The extent of his walk was not more than thirty yards, and thus at no time could he have been more than fifteen yards from his charger. He was armed in the usual way with a short rifle and a tulwar or sword. While thus doing duty, a hillman was

watching him with an eye to business. He managed to crawl quite close to him without exciting notice; and waiting quietly until the sentry was near the end of his walk, and of course with his back to the horse, the robber cut the charger's rope, mounted him, and in a moment was galloping from the station. The sentry fired his rifle in the direction in which his steed had gone; guards turned out, and a lot of noise was raised; but the outwitted soldier never saw his horse again. To him the loss was a serious one, as the horses of the native cavalry regiments do not belong to the government, but to the troopers themselves.

The Peshawur robbers are not only daring fellows by nature and training—conscience being a commodity of which they do not know anything, and for which they have really no word in their language—but their courage in their enterprises is kept up by the careful preparations which they make before beginning any serious undertaking in their line. They strip themselves of every article of clothing, and then smear themselves over with oil or ghee, which is butter prepared in a particular way for keeping. Thus they can literally give the slip to any one attempting to lay hold of them. In addition to this precaution they carry a knife about the length of the arm, somewhat heavy, and of the keenest edge.

Farther 'down country' there prevailed a strange custom among the professional thieves, which I have not seen noticed in any books. They fasten iron hooks—very similar in shape to our ordinary fish-hooks—to their fingers. Should they be disturbed in their operations, and attacked, they claw the faces of those trying to capture them, and thus inflict four terrible wounds.

One of the most common preparations to insure safety made by the hillmen when they intend to rob a house in the cantonments, is a very simple one. They provide themselves with ten or a dozen stones half the size of the fist, which they lay down on the ground at intervals on their approach to the house on which they contemplate operations. Should they be disturbed or pursued, they retreat on the line of the stones, and picking them up as they retire, throw them at their pursuers, and with such precision and force, that we have never heard of a capture under these circumstances.

Seldom indeed do the thieves, unless compelled, use violence, though they, like all their countrymen, hold life cheap. They prefer to carry off their booty quietly. I was in a camp on one occasion, when some thieves came into the regimental bazaar and lifted the tent in which the baker and his wife were sleeping without disturbing their slumbers, and carried it away. The silence of the movements and the gentleness of the touch of these men are wonderful. One has difficulty in believing the story about the native who climbed a tree and took an egg out of a nest without disturbing the bird which was sitting on it; and one has a little more difficulty in believing the addition to the story, that while the man was taking the egg, a second man climbed the tree and stole his trousers. But I have known servants who put the socks on the feet of their masters without disturbing them, before they awoke them for morning parade with, 'Sahib, Sahib, bugle gone,' and it is a well-known fact

that a good 'professional' will take the sheet from under a person lying upon it, even after he has given warning that he will do so. The plan adopted is ingenious. The performer folds very smoothly the one side of the sheet which is not occupied. He then tickles the ear or the nostril of the sleeper gently, but sufficient to cause him to turn round a little. The piece of sheet thus gained is added to the folds. The process is repeated until one half the sheet is in folds. The operator then goes to the opposite side of the bed, and with a delicate use of the feather he soon has the sleeper over the folded portion, and the delicate trick accomplished.

A very good illustration of the confidence which the hillmen have in their ability to do their work quietly, occurred some years ago. One of the highest military officials, whose name is well known along the western side of India, and who should have been a very prominent person in the late war, was promoted on account of excellent services to an important post 'down country.' A night or two before his departure, and after all his goods had been packed up, he and his wife were awakened from their sleep by a noise in their bedroom. Before them were several men coolly removing their boxes. The officer, with perhaps more courage than prudence, at once made an attempt to defend his property, but this quickly induced one of the robbers to fire a pistol at him, with fortunately a badly directed aim. They knew that the report would arouse the neighbourhood, and that further chance for that night was gone, and accordingly they took to flight. Subsequent inquiries shewed that the robbery had been deliberately planned, and that many were engaged in it. Men were placed at short distances from each other a considerable way along the road leading to the country, to hand the boxes one to the other. The men who entered the bedroom had the hardihood to light a candle, and the cunning to shade its light from the eyes of the sleepers by keeping the lady's parasol, which they had opened for the purpose, between them and it. It was found that some of the officer's servants had had a hand in the attempt to rob him, and one or two were punished; but their accomplices were never caught.

I have only to allude to the way in which the hillmen try to get possession of firearms. There is nothing they prize so highly as the British soldier's rifle and some rounds of ammunition. Every precaution is taken to secure the rifles, but during the time I was in the station many were stolen. An order was given commanding every soldier to place his rifle under his cotton mattress and sleep upon it. Still the rifles were lost. There was a suspicion that some of the soldiers sold them; and accordingly strong presses were placed in the barrack-rooms, in which the rifles were lodged every night; but still now and then rifles were missing. The hillmen, finding that their chance in the barrack-rooms had gone, turned their attention to the guard-rooms. The guard consisted of a sergeant and twelve men at least. Each man had his rifle, and every sentry had his rifle loaded. The thieves easily managed to escape the notice of the sentry in a dark night, and slip into the guard-room; and there they generally succeeded in finding at least one rifle handy, and made off with it. If the sentry

discovered what was going on, he was unwilling to fire, because if he sent a bullet through one of the robbers, he was tried by a general court-martial. Though 'honourably acquitted' was always the finding, the trial nevertheless brought a great amount of trouble to him—a fact of which the thieves were doubtless aware.

T H E E V I C T I O N :

AND WHAT CAME OF IT.

IN TEN CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER III.

MY reverie was interrupted by the low prolonged sound of a horn, proceeding apparently from some point not far from the mansion. I at once extinguished the lights upon the table, and, going to the dining-room window, partially undid the shutters. From the point where I stood I had a view of a long strip of lawn, bordered on both sides by a dense wood. I looked and listened attentively. The night was very calm, and the moon lit up the whole place almost as bright as day. Soon again the dull booming of the horn could be heard; and immediately after, I saw three men emerge from the trees on the right hand at some distance from the house, cross the lawn leisurely, and plunge into the wood on the opposite side. This observation made me very uneasy. It was now well-nigh midnight, and all honest country-folk would be in bed long before that hour. I might have concluded the persons I had observed to be poachers; but poachers do not usually rally together at the sound of a horn. I remained standing at the window for some time longer; but, nothing more presenting itself, I closed the shutters again carefully, and went up to bed. All night long I was oppressed with sad forebodings, and sleep fled from my eyes.

Early next morning, Donnelly the bailiff came to me in a state of great excitement and alarm. He declined to utter a syllable till we were alone in the office. Then, after having carefully examined the doors and apertures, as if to preclude the possibility of an eaves-dropper, he returned, and remarked to me in a sepulchral tone: 'Mr Wharton, this affair of Scallan's is goin' to be a bad business. Me boy Mick brought me home a quare letter last night—the murdherinest letter I ever read. It called me the stag Donnelly, an' wint on to say that the bhoys wor goin' to have me life for intherfarein' in the eviction, an' backin' Nesbitt for to get the farrum. It made me blood run cold. An' there wos thrampin' o' men round me house the whole blessed night.'

'Could your son,' I asked, 'recognise the man who gave him the note?'

'No sir, barrin' that he was a dark low-set man, an' apparently a stranger in these parts. Ochone! I'm not the same thing at all at all since I got it. Here it is, sir.'

I took the letter from the bailiff's trembling hand, and perused it carefully. It was apparently written by the same hand as the letter I had received, but conveyed threats much more dire and peremptory. No wonder that it unnerved him; it would have unnerved many a stouter-hearted fellow than he apparently was. I strove to reassure him as best I could, assumed a jocular air, and told him that doubtless some folks were

trying to frighten him. But jocularity sat ill upon me in my present mood; and I utterly failed to reassure the unfortunate bailiff. He talked dismally about his wife and family—he asked me to make his will. He reminded me of a fact which I feared was but too true—that I didn't know the class of people I had got to deal with. He said it was easy for me to see my way. I could come and go as I liked; but he, in virtue of his little holding, was doomed to live among them, for better or worse; and the tenor of the letter left little doubt that it would be for worse. These were facts; and facts were stubborn things. As I was casting about for some device, it occurred to me that I might do worse than get young Mr Carnegie's advice upon the matter. No sooner said than done. I went to the desk and wrote a short note to him, stating that I wished to see him as soon as possible on some very urgent business. Having directed it, I gave it into the hands of Donnelly to deliver. He readily divined its purport, and appeared considerably satisfied withal, if I could judge by the alacrity with which he left the office to execute his errand. I had been careful to conceal as much as possible my own uneasiness, and of course forbore mention of the threatening letter which I myself had received.

Scarcely had he left the office when the Scotchman Nesbitt entered it. The latter came to tell me that he had changed his mind about the taking of Scallan's farm; that he had been over it, and found it generally unsuitable for his purposes. 'The land was as bare as a tin whistler,' to use his own expression. Besides, he had got an unco unpleasant epistle ower-nicht, full o' threatnin' an' murther; an' he, for fear that he wad get his 'head in his hand,' wad like to let the matter drop.

This view of things, so advisable from the Scotchman's point of view, put me in a very awkward fix. However, without loss of time I set myself to get out of it, by sending a special message to the two other competitors for the land, who luckily lived in the neighbourhood. They answered my call with sufficient promptness; but they also had caught the contagion. It was threue, they said, that they wor lookin' for land, but each of them had got better offers since they wor spakin' to me about Scallan's farrum. An' forbye that, the farrum was in the hight of dissolution, the ditches bruk down, an' not as much grass on it as 'ud graze a Tom-cat. Wid respect, they wouldn't go no farther wid the job, an' shure there wus no harrum done.

I was in a state of mind far from enviable, as a result of these negotiations, when the servant entering, announced Mr Carnegie. I hailed his arrival with extreme satisfaction. I felt that he was just the man to direct me in the present crisis. He knew the country, and he knew the people. His genial spirit was calculated to invite confidence; so I talked to him without restraint. I detailed to him the incident of the morning, and shewed him the two threatening letters. I asked him for advice in the matter; there was no one, I said, better qualified to give it. As for myself, I was at a dead-lock.

'Is there no prospect of applications for the land from elsewhere?' he asked.

'I fear not,' said I.

'And you don't feel inclined to hush up the business by giving back the land to Scallan ?'

'Certainly not. Besides, even if I were ever so much inclined to that course, it is impossible to adopt it, after what has occurred between the parties concerned.'

'Well then, the farm must run to waste unless something is done.'

'I suppose so.'

'A happy thought strikes me. Why not stock it yourself? It will get you out of your dilemma, and prove a profitable way of investing your extra capital besides.'

'The idea is really very good, Mr Carnegie. But I don't know anything about cattle or fairs; and I would like to get the thing settled at once, if at all.'

'There is a score of bullocks down at my place, that I'm preparing for the Nobber Fair. You might step down and have a look at them. If they please you—and I think they will—we could get them quietly slipped over to Scallan's lands after dark without any unnecessary fuss.'

'I am sure I am extremely obliged to you for your suggestion; it is just the thing. I am quite satisfied to leave the entire matter in your hands.'

'Nothing of the kind, my dear sir. Friendship is all very well in its way; but business is business. Send your man Donnelly down; he is a good judge of cattle, and can drive a bargain with any cattle-jobber in the country. Between us, we can settle the value of the lot, and he can have them back with him. The whole thing is quite simple.'

'Take care, however,' I put in, 'that you don't allow the fellow to cut you down in the price of the bullocks. Their value to me is greatly enhanced by the circumstances of the case.'

'There is no ground for alarm on that score,' replied Mr Carnegie, smiling. 'I know how to take care of myself.'

'I certainly feel greatly relieved at having my difficulty solved so satisfactorily.'

'Oh, that is all well enough. I should be much better pleased to know that you realised your exact position. At this moment, you are in a state of extreme peril. By receiving tenders for Scallan's farm you have thrown down the gauntlet to the Ribbonmen; and doubtless ere this they have arraigned you before their dreadful tribunal.'

'Oh, I am not unprepared,' said I, throwing back my double-breasted coat, and displaying to his admiring gaze a Colt's revolver and a pair of pistols.

'All very well; but useless, sir—perfectly useless, if you intend to move about the country. You don't suppose that the Ribbonman is going to have a duel with you? No sir; he will have at you from behind a wall or a hedge. You must keep indoors this weather; it is your only chance. Leave the bailiff, or somebody, or anybody, to manage your business, and to come down periodically to report progress. The rascals may be, and probably are lying in wait for you at your own gate. I observe a number of very suspicious characters about the neighbourhood just at present.'

'But I am not my own master; it is absolutely necessary that I should go out. Besides, constant

staying in the house would be insupportable; it would be worse than imprisonment itself. What means of protection would you suggest for me to adopt out of doors—to employ occasionally, you know?'

'Well, the best thing you can do is to mount an inner coat of mail, one that's bullet-proof. There is such a one down at my place, which my poor uncle wore in the bad times. You are welcome to it, of course. I daresay you'll find it somewhat heavy; but that is a thing of small importance when life is at stake. I shall send it over to you this evening by Donnelly.'

'A thousand thanks. You could not have hit upon anything better. By the way, talking of arms and armour, don't you think that a little revolver practice would do me no harm—just to steady myself if any difficulty arose? It would give me something to do indoors.'

'It is a most excellent idea: I was on the point of broaching it. During the bad times, my uncle went in for three or four hours of it every day; it was his favourite pastime. He used to remark that every land-agent in Westmeath should be able to hit an ace of hearts twice out of three times at fifteen paces.'

'It will be a long time, I fear, before I arrive at such a pitch of excellence.'

'You can only do your best. Believe me, it is most important; for if in an encounter with those rascals, you happen to miss your mark, it's bound to be all up with you. Independent of that, it will give them a hint in season.'

'In what way?'

'When they come to hear that you are a marksman. There are spies about, who will be safe to report your movements to the fraternity; ay, spies where you least expect them—among your own domestics, perhaps. The fact is, every man in the country is a Ribbonman; he must be one, to be able to live in the country at all.'

'What about Donnelly?'

'Oh, he's all right; he's as true as steel. A bailiff stands on the same footing as a policeman in Ireland; and both are considered as the tools of English despotism. Donnelly might be trusted with untold gold; but he's a doomed man, sir, if there was ever one in Westmeath.'

'Poor fellow! he will leave a wife and family behind him,' I sighed, thinking of my own case.

'Ah, yes; that is the worst point about most of these occurrences. When a fellow is single and unencumbered, he doesn't mind running risks. But we must hope for the best; and if the worst does come to the worst, why, sir, it is the visitation of Providence. But I must be off. Don't forget to send Donnelly over.'

'Before you go, allow me to thank you again for your very great kindness. Believe me, I can never forget it.'

'Tut, tut, man—nothing of the kind. But if anything does occur where my advice or assistance would be of use, be sure to let me know. By night or day, at whatever time the message comes, I shall be ready. Meanwhile, expose yourself as little as possible. So good-bye.'

That evening, the bailiff went over to Mr Carnegie's place; looked at the cattle; purchased a score of the best; and after nightfall, drafted them over into Scallan's meadows. He brought

the coat of mail back with him also. I saw him cast very wistful looks at the same as he handed it to me. For his own protection, I gave him a brace of pistols and an American bowie-knife; for which he seemed grateful. Poor man! he seemed to require such things more than myself. He went home in high feather.

When all the domestics had retired to rest, I went up to my bedroom and tried on the coat of mail. It was somewhat heavy, but appeared fully up to its business—that is, of stopping a flying bullet. The possession of such an apparatus should, I suppose, have eased my mind considerably. But somehow it did not. On the contrary, I felt as despondent as ever. I could not but reflect that such armour afforded a very poor protection after all. At that very moment, midnight assassins might be surrounding the house; perhaps might be lurking in the very next chamber. I slept very little that night; and what sleep I had was troubled with harassing dreams.

THE FATE OF THE SPANISH ARMADA OF 1588.

THE great Armada which in 1588 was prepared by Philip II. of Spain to conquer England and Ireland, in order to crush the Protestant religion in these countries and to punish Queen Elizabeth and her subjects for their apostasy from the faith of their ancestors, will always be considered an interesting historical event. As is well known, the preparations of Philip had lasted eight years, and were on a great scale. A fleet of one hundred and thirty-two large vessels, commanded by the Duke de Medina-Sidonia, carrying three thousand one hundred and sixty-five guns, and about thirty thousand soldiers and sailors, sailed from Lisbon; while an army of forty thousand men under the Duke of Parma was assembled in Flanders, to co-operate with the Armada. On the 20th of July, the Spanish Admiral, having received information that the English fleet had taken shelter in Plymouth, made for that port, in order to destroy it; but during the night the English ships glided out of the harbour, and on the following morning attacked the Spanish fleet in its rear.

After various vicissitudes, the Armada, as every reader knows, suffered dreadful disasters; but as the ultimate fate of many of the ships and their commanders may not be so generally known, we propose to offer a few words on the subject.

One of the squadrons, commanded by Don Juan Gomez de Medina, which consisted of about twenty ships, was wrecked on Fair Isle, between Orkney and Shetland, where those who escaped drowning suffered great hunger and cold for six or seven weeks. The commander having at length obtained a vessel, the shipwrecked Spaniards put to sea, and at last found themselves off the little seaport town of Anstruther in Fifeshire, where the officers landed, and asked for shelter and assistance. The bailies of the town, surprised at the arrival of so many strangers, notified this unusual event to their minister Mr James Melville, who happened to have some knowledge of Spanish, and who thus records what took place: ‘Up I got with diligence, and assembling the honest men of the town, came

to the Tolbooth; and after consultation taken to hear them and what answer to make, there presents us a very reverend man, of big stature, and grave and stout countenance, gray-haired, and very humble-like, wha, after meikle and very low courtesy, bowing down with his face near the ground, and touching my shoe with his hand, began his harangue in the Spanish tongue, whereof I understood the substance, and being about to answer in Latin, he having only a young man with him to be his interpreter, began and tauld over again to us in gude English. The sum was, that they were come hither, as to their special friends and confederates, to kiss the king's majesty's hand of Scotland—and therewith becket [bowed] evin to the yird [ground]—and to find relief and comfort thereby to himself, these gentlemen, captains, and the poor soulldiers, whose condition was for the present maist miserable and pitiful.’

The Laird of Anstruther entertained the commander and his officers; while the soldiers, to the number of two hundred and sixty—described ‘for the maist part young beardless men, silly [weak], tranchled [worn out], and hungered’—received shelter and a supply of ‘kail, pottage, and fish.’ The names of the officers, besides Juan Gomez, were Capitan Patricio, Capitan de Legoretto, Capitan de Luffero, Capitan Mauricio, and Signor Serrano.

Melville also relates an interesting anecdote in connection with this circumstance, which was, that on his return home, the Spanish Admiral shewed great kindness to the crew of an Anstruther vessel which he found arrested at Calais. ‘He rode to court for her, and made great roose [praise] of Scotland to his king, took the honest men to his house, and enquirit for the Laird of Anstruther, for the minister, and his host, and sent haune many commendations.’

It is interesting as connecting these remote events with the present time, that in 1870 a Shetland gentleman, Mr Edmonston of Buness, presented to the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland a chair which belonged to the Spanish Admiral wrecked on Fair Isle. There is also preserved in the family of Mr Balfour of Trenaby a silver cup, given by the Admiral to a native of Fair Isle, named Malcolm Sinclair. It is also believed that the shipwrecked Spaniards instructed the natives of Shetland in knitting and dyeing the fine wool of their country, articles made of which are now so much esteemed.

On the west coast of Scotland, several ships of the Armada were wrecked. About the beginning of October 1588, one of the larger ones, in which there were five hundred men, sixty brass besides other guns, and a great deal of gold and silver, was driven ashore near the Mull of Cantyre. It was suddenly blown up with gunpowder, when two or three hundred men perished. Another ship having found its way into the Firth of Clyde, sunk near Portincross Castle, Ayrshire; but in this case some of the crew were saved. In 1740 several guns were recovered from this wreck by divers, one of which, having traces of the Spanish crown and arms, lay for many years beside the old castle. In 1855 a descendant of one of these Spaniards, who was said to have retained many of the peculiarities of his race, died at an advanced age at Ardrossan.

Another vessel of the Armada, called the *Florida*,

was blown up and destroyed off the harbour of Tobermory, a plot for that purpose having been planned and executed under the direction of Maclean of Dowart, for which he obtained a remission under the Privy Seal. Remains of this vessel have been within a recent period occasionally brought up. Part of the wood was presented by Sir Walter Scott to His Majesty George IV. on his visit to Edinburgh in 1822. Several attempts were made to recover the sunk treasure in the *Florida*; one in 1688 by Sacheverel, governor of Man, who tried diving-bells with success. The report of the country was that he recovered many valuables. Another attempt was made in 1740 by Sir Archibald Grant and Captain Roe to raise her by means of divers and machinery. This attempt was unsuccessful; but some guns were brought up. Within the last year or two the question has been again mooted.

On the coast of Ireland, above seventeen ships of the Armada, with nearly twelve thousand men, were wrecked or destroyed; and such of the crews as escaped shipwreck were either executed or murdered by the natives. In the beginning of October 1588, during a storm, a galleon of one thousand tons, named *Our Lady of the Rosary*, went to pieces on the coast of Kerry. Out of a crew of seven hundred men, five hundred had died, and the remainder—most of whom were gentlemen—there perished; the son of the pilot, who had lashed himself to a plank, alone being saved. Seven ships were dashed to pieces on the coast of Clare, and only one hundred and fifty men, who struggled through the surf, escaped. A galleon commanded by Don Lewis of Cordova surrendered at Galway, and other vessels went on shore at different points of Connemara. Any survivors of these crews were shot or hanged; the only exception being Don Lewis, whose ransom it was supposed might be valuable. A galleon commanded by Don Pedro de Mendoza ran aground behind Clare Island. The Don landed with one hundred companions, taking with them their chests of treasure; but the chief of the island, Dowdany O'Malley, set upon and killed them all; while a few days afterwards the ship itself was in a storm dashed upon the rocks, and all the crew were drowned. Another galleon was wrecked in the immediate vicinity of Clare Island, and the crew were either drowned or killed by the people. On the coast between Sligo and Ballyshannon, the principal destruction of the Spanish Armada took place. There the scene was one of the most frightful ever witnessed. Sir G. Fenton wrote at the time: 'When I was at Sligo, I numbered on one strand, of less than five miles in length, eleven hundred dead bodies of men, which the sea had driven upon the shore. The country-people told me the like was in other places, though not to the like number.' It was computed that eight thousand Spaniards perished between the Giants' Causeway and Blasket Sound. Any that the sea spared were killed on land. Sir Richard Bingham, the governor of Connaught, claimed to have killed eleven hundred! A man named Melaghlin McCalbe was also reported to have despatched no less than eighty with his gallows-axe. When a galleon came ashore, the natives flocked like wolves to the scene. As the crews were flung on the sands, some drowned, some struggling for life, they became the prey of the

savages who were watching for them. 'A stroke of a club,' says Froude, 'brought all to a common state, and stripped of the finery which had been their destruction, they were left to the wash of the tide.'

The fate of one of the ships of the Armada called the *Rata*, commanded by Don Alonso da Leyva, one of the bravest and best loved of the Spanish officers, forms perhaps the saddest episode in the history of the expedition. To the care of this officer many of the noblest youths of Castile had been intrusted. His ship had been in the thickest of every fight, and although much shattered, found its way to Blacksod Bay, and anchored outside Ballycroy. In a storm about the beginning of September, the ship was driven on shore, and Don Leyva with his crew managed to land, and took shelter in an old castle in the neighbourhood. After a short time they fell in with another galleon and a galleass of the Armada which happened to be off the coast, in which they put to sea; but they were afterwards driven on the rocks, and again were shipwrecked. In October, however, a galleass that had gone on shore at Callibeg was repaired, and Don Alonso taking the half of the survivors on board, at length ventured to set sail for the west of Scotland. The vessel, however, struck on a rock off Dunluce and went to pieces. Only five out of the whole number were saved, while Don Alonso and the Castilian nobles at last perished. Two hundred and sixty of their bodies were washed ashore, and committed promiscuously to the grave.

Of the whole Armada, only fifty-four ships, with between eight and nine thousand men, returned to Spain; the latter in such a wretched state that it was piteous to see them. They were so overcome with hardships and fatigue, and so dispirited with their discomfiture, that all their country was filled with accounts of the desperate valour of the English, and of the tempestuous violence of the ocean by which their islands were surrounded. Nearly every noble family in Spain was thrown into mourning, from having lost sons, brothers, or other relatives, who had entered the Armada as volunteers in this holy crusade. 'They had rushed,' says Froude, 'into the service with an emotion pure and generous as ever sent Templars to the Sepulchre of Christ. They believed that they were the soldiers of the Almighty.' These delusions, however, were dispelled by the English cannon; while to complete their misfortunes, the elements hurled them upon the most dangerous coasts in the world.

MY LITTLE SWEETHEART.

A STUDY FROM LIFE.

WHEN I first knew her, she was fifteen years old; I was twenty-four. She was a schoolmaster's daughter; I, a schoolmaster's son. We first met one September evening. Her father was a struggling pedagogue, with a family of seven children to support, and few pupils. I had it in my head to become his partner, and went down first to see how things were looking. I arrived after a lengthy journey; and the first thing I saw when ushered into the room was a little girl seated in an old arm-chair, with a

big book upon her knee. Such a little girl, in short frocks, hardly up to my shoulders. She shook hands with me; and as she did so, I noticed her eyes were blue, her hair was a golden brown, escaping from its bonds in rippling wavelets; and that she had a curiously winning smile, smiling not only with her lips, but with her eyes and face and all. Later on, I was struck by the way her little head was poised upon her shoulders. She was upright as a dart; and when she moved, it was with an infinite grace, as some tiny queen.

Her name was Emily; to her friends she was always Em. I am not, and was not particularly susceptible; but in some strange fashion this little fifteen-year-old lady wound herself round my heart as no one ever did before or since. She was the greatest puss. She was full of mischief as an egg of meat. She was lazy; she was untidy; she was perpetually—and deservedly—in hot-water; but with it all, she was as some little maiden stepped down from fairyland.

She and I struck up a friendship. She always did make friends with all male creatures, whether five years old or fifty. I was a scribbler even then; and I fancy the pride of authorship, even in so small a degree, had a certain charm for her, which set me up in her eyes. She wrote her name in my birthday-book; and beneath it I wrote, 'My Little Sweetheart.' It lies before me at this moment. She was the most audacious talker; would prattle of all things under heaven, and was never happy if her tongue were still. She was full of the grandest projects; meant to do the greatest things; and in moments of enthusiasm would pour forth her ambitious soul. But she had no idea of anything beyond its commencement; she knew not what system was, and would take up a plan but to fling it from her, just like the idle puss she was. One thing, and one thing only, would she persevere in—mischief.

'Reform!' she would say, when very penitent, her sins being anew found out. 'Now, did you ever hear of anybody reforming at fifteen?' This with her hands behind her, and the most solemnly comical look in the blue eyes which waited for an answer to her question. 'I think,' she would say, if you could manage to be in earnest with her five minutes in succession, 'if you only give me one more chance, I will—yes, I *will* be better.'

But no. She would fly through her work like a bird flinging unwelcome showers from its wing. She could not see that life was real.

Yet had she good cause to see that it was so. It was the hardest struggle in the world for her father and mother to bring two ends together. Very little money was ever hers. Her wardrobe was of the scantiest. She knew nothing of pleasure, as some people understand it; she had never been ten miles out of the town where she was born. Yet there must have been some fairy present at her birth, for she was like a summer's day, always bright. Not that she could not be grave. That was one of her rarest charms—her gift of sympathy. Only let some one whom she knew and cared for be in sorrow, and Em would not be far away. Dark indeed would be that

sorrow which did not change to light when *her* sun was shining. Her voice, her eyes, her arms, all joined to drive the shadows away, and soothe the sufferer with the presence of her love.

Yet was it love? That is a question I have been long revolving. Did My Little Sweetheart understand what love might be? Hardly. There was no depth in her nature; and that foundation of patience on which love must rest, was scarcely there. Hers was a heart which felt for all the world, but only till it laughed with her. Absence never made her heart grow fonder; and if she sorrowed to part with you to-day, she joyed with your successor on the morrow. Constancy was more than she could fathom; and he would have been a foolish fellow who would have had her wait till he carved his way to fortune. She could not understand that life was real.

Time sped. I had now known her more than two years. I was going for a rambling expedition to foreign parts; and though I knew I was a fool for my pains, to me it was a bitter parting. And so for the time, I think it was to her; for in some way links had been joined between us without our ever knowing they were being forged.

'Well,' said I to her, the day before I went, we being alone together, 'Blue Eyes, how long shall I be missed?'

The only answer was to throw herself upon the hearth-rug, place her hands upon my knees, and turn her eyes up towards my face.

'Ah, Blue Eyes,' said I, trifling with her sunny hair, 'you'll have another sweetheart in a week.'

'In a week?' said she, in that curiously clear voice of hers. 'Do you think so?' She looked up at me and watched me for a moment. Then she turned and got upon her knees, kneeling in front of me. 'Perhaps so,' she said, 'But—leaning forward, so that her breath mingled with mine—"he'll never be a sweetheart like you.'

What could I do? I knew her so well! I knew that this was just what she would say to any one by way of comfort. I knew that her words were as trifles, light as air.

'Make no vows,' said I, 'only to be broken. You and I have had happy times; why should I begrudge the same to another?'

She was silent. She was now nearly eighteen; but she was so small, that it never occurred to me to think of her as anything but a little girl. She put her hands out and took mine, still in the same quiet fashion. 'Would you like me to?' said she—'would you like me to—to take another?'

'Em,' said I, 'what does it matter what I like? Before the sun has gone down upon my going, another day will have dawned for you.' I looked at her. It came to me that this was very bitter, and however great a fool I might be, I could not entirely hide what was in my heart. 'Little Sweetheart,' said I, 'of one thing be sure—I never shall forget you.'

She came to me, and I kissed her. She still kept her face near mine. 'Bertie,' said she—it was the first time she had ever called me Bertie; it had always been plain Mister before, and the name rang in my ears—'Bertie, I'll not forget you in a week.'

I almost pushed her from me. I knew this dalliance was worse than folly—I knew her so well—and rose to my feet. ‘No,’ said I, with bitter mirth; ‘not in a week, but in eight days.’

She made no answer, but still knelt at my feet. And so we parted; for the farewell on the morrow was but a formal one.

Two years passed by. Occasionally I sent her little notes, pictures of noted places, foolish curiosities. But I never gave her my address. I knew letter-writing was not her strong point, and for some reason I did not like to think that she would not write, although she could. Through it all I bore her memory with me, and wherever I might be, at times would come the shadow of her sweet face. I would not own it to myself; but now and again I hungered for a sight of her, and because I knew it was so, and that it was such foolishness, I stopped away longer than I had intended. But at last I came back. One of my first visits was to B—; for, try how I would, I could not deny the longing for another sight of her. I found that the position of the parents of Em had little improved; and her mother told me that she had gone into the world as a governess. Such had always been the intention; but I wondered what sort of governess she would make. A staid *gouvernante*? with those blue eyes, and that smile, that everlasting spirit of mischief which would be bubbling out? Fancy her a sober preceptress! And who were her sweethearts now? Was there a pupil old enough to be made the recipient of her favours? Or was there some one who was not a pupil, still more capable? Well, what did it matter to me? She and I had each our way to go.

Her mother told me her situation was in the neighbourhood of Ryde. Happening to have friends in that town, I made them an excuse for a visit there. Yet, on my arrival, I was in no hurry to find them out; and taking up my quarters in a quiet inn, I prepared to have a day or two alone. It was a Saturday afternoon, lovely weather; and I set out for a walk well known in years gone by, through the Lovers’ Lane, past Quarr Abbey, to Fishhouse, nestling by the water’s side. It was so warm, and the country was so alive with beauty, that I took my time and lingered, noting spots memory once held dear. Reaching Quarr Woods, I wandered through the brushwood to the water’s edge. Along the shore there runs or ran a wall, an old moss-grown wall; and within this wall an ancient garden—so ancient it deserved no better name than wilderness. The weeds grew rank and thick, and no hand but Nature’s had much to answer for in it. There was an old green gate at the bottom, which moved on rusty hinges; under the trees was a garden-seat, much the worse for weather and wear; and on the left was an old summer-house, damp and mildewy, with steps up to the roof, and seats upon it.

Now once upon a time when I was a tutor at Ryde, I was wont to linger with my young charges in this same garden. They would play upon the shore or among the woods; while I would lie upon the roof of the old summer-house, sheltered by the trees, looking out upon the summer sea, smoking, reading, or in a waking dream. So, partly because of old times, partly

because it was so fine a day, I entered the garden and climbed up to the old roof-seat. My pipe, in sympathy with the weather, was soothing to my nerves. Gradually substance became shadow; the soft wind sang sweet music to my languid ears, and a gentle charm came over me. I fancy it was sleep. Utopian to lie there, the wavelets rippling softly upon the shore; dim suspicion of unclouded skies pervading my dreams!

Somewhat woke me—a sound. I opened my eyes, dreamily conscious that voices were somewhere near. I lay listening with a sort of curiosity, and became aware that I was listening to the prattle of children; little voices were borne upon the breeze, children’s laughter mingling with the rippling waves. But every now and then there was another voice, not a child’s, yet childlike. It was familiar to my ears, and as I listened, its sound woke within me chords of forgotten music. Before many seconds had gone, I knew it was Em’s voice I heard. But I did not move, nor did I turn to see. I lay as in a tower of strength; and it was a comfortable feeling to know that I had but to turn upon my elbow, and there before me would be the little lady who once was My Little Sweetheart. But at last I moved. I rose upon my elbow quietly, so as to make no noise, and looked over the side of the summer-house on to the garden below. And there I saw her. She was on the seat under the trees. About her were four children, two boys and two girls. They stood at her knees close together, watching her make a chain of daisy flowers. She had grown, but not much; she was still a little maiden, and it was plain she never would rank among big women. She was dressed in blue—a little blue cloth cap perched daintily upon her dainty head, still poised like a queen’s upon her shoulders, and a blue serge dress, which fitted better, I noticed, than her dresses used to do. Even from where I was I could see her blue eyes flashing, and that wonderful smile upon her face. She was certainly prettier than of old, and she still looked like a maiden stepped down from fairydom.

I lay still and watched, content to be near her. I knew I had but to open my lips, and she would be with me on the instant. But I did not choose. I preferred, like a child, to play with pleasure, spinning it out to its full length. It was a summer’s ecstasy, and for a while I would not break the charm. But then the thought came to me, what would she do if she knew that I was there? Wondering what the answer might be, softly, hardly above a whisper, I gently called ‘Em!’ But she, engaged with the daisy-chain and with her little ones, did not hear, and paid no heed. So, smiling as I watched her, a second time I called a little louder—‘Em!’ But still she did not hear. The daisy-chain and little ones seemed to engross all her thoughts, and my voice blew past her with the wind. How would it do, I thought, since she was so obstinately deaf, to rouse her by confronting her? If she would not hear, she should see, and her eyes, if not her ears, be opened. With some such fancy, I was just about to rise and intrude myself upon her presence, when I noticed the figure of a man coming down the path.

I had no objection to children witnessing our meeting, though I could have spared even them;

but a third party, and he a stranger, I did not want. So I waited till he should have gone. He was a young man, a gentleman beyond doubt, good-looking, dressed in a gray suit of Scotch tweed, and bright red necktie. His was a fair young face. He had a promising moustache, which he tended with one hand; and he was smoking a mighty meerschaum. Instead of passing as I expected, when he reached the wall he paused and looked at the group within. There was I, peeping over the outer edge of the summer-house, wondering what kept him there. There was he, leaning with one hand upon the moss-green wall. There was she with her daisy-chain, and children at her knees. Just as I thought he would surely be moving on, to my surprise he vaulted lightly over the wall, hiding behind the very summer-house on which I sat. Then quickly and quietly, he passed from tree to tree, as though he wished to do so unobserved, until at last he was behind where the unsuspecting maiden sat.

While I watched with angry eyes, he darted from his hiding-place, ran to her from behind, drew her head back to him, and kissed her twice or thrice upon the lips. The blood boiled within my veins. I did not doubt that this was a dastard outrage, and that my darling needed a defender. In a minute, vengeance would have been done, and he or I would have lain low. But her answer shewed I was mistaken. 'Charlie!' cried she, with that sweet smile I knew so well; 'how can you kiss me before the children!'

'Why not?' said he. 'Don't I kiss them before you?' And to prove his words, he snatched up a little girl and kissed her again and again, she laughing at the fun. Then he sat down by her side, and putting his arms about her, drew her to him. The daisy-chain dropped to her lap, and she looked at him as though he were all the world to her. 'Darling!' said he, not loudly, but loud enough for me to hear, 'I have spoken to my mother about you and me to-day; and she thinks I am very foolish; but since I always have been, and always will be so, she thinks I may as well take you to be my little wife—though you will be very foolish for letting me.'

Her answer was to lay her head upon his shoulder, and flash her blue eyes with a still softer blue upon his face. 'Charlie!' said she, 'are you sure you love me?'

'Love you?' he returned, and he meant it—'my darling, more than I can tell!'

'And you are sure,' she continued, 'your mother will not be angry? I could not bear to anger her.'

'Angry?' said he, closing her lips with kisses. 'Who in all the world could be angry with My Little Sweetheart?'

And so on. The children looking on, at what was a new experience to them. What mattered? They would have to learn themselves some day, though perhaps they were beginning early. And I—I had to listen to it all. Who could have shewn himself, placed as I was, at such a time? They cooed and cooed, and made love as love has so oft been made, until the afternoon was spent, and then they went. And I was free to go as well. Was I disillusioned? Partly, though the fault was all my own. Once I knew her well. The knowledge which for a time was lost, was only found again.

I have not seen her since. For some cause, her happiness stuck in my throat, and I left Ryde that evening. I may never see her again. Ere this, doubtless she is another's wife. But when I think of her, even to this hour it is as My Little Sweetheart.

BY A POET'S GRAVE.

THE Spring has come and gone,
Yet silent sleeps he on;
His poet-heart unstirred
By leaf or song of bird.
Though daisies dot the lea,
And blossoms crowd the tree;
Though Earth responsive all
Awaken from Winter's thrall,
And finds restored what Autumn had decayed,
No Spring-tide reaches where the dead are laid.

The Summer calls in vain;
Not here he wakes again.
The south wind's balmy breath
Wooes not the ear of Death.
Not all the wealth of flowers—
Not all the sunlit hours
Making Earth glorious,
Can bring him back to us.
And for his sake, but half is ours, I ween,
Of Summer's gladness and its golden sheen.

Then, pensive, Autumn come,
With woodlands bleak and dumb,
When garnered are thy sheaves,
And shed thy flowers and leaves—
Come, veiled, his grave to greet
Who, laid at Nature's feet,
Had listened rapt and long
To learn her matchless song.
Come, wail him, Autumn winds and weeping skies;
Moisten the sod where our dead darling lies.

Yet let him sleep, nor rave.
The boon we idly crave,
That he might live again
In mortal strife and pain,
Though joy to us it brought,
For him were dearly bought.
Then let him sleep, great heart,
Since but the grosser part
To dust is given, and where his spirit wakes,
The dawn of heaven's eternal Summer breaks—

And though his sun be set
For us—glory yet
Beams on us through our tears,
That all the after-years
A light and guide will be—
A hallowed memory.
He liveth still—above,
And lives he in our love.

And though, alas, the cold grave lies between,
That love will keep his grave for ever green.

G. P. D.

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